

Copy

Dear Mr. Edison:
I want to let
you know my conception of
the incandescent lamp invention
and development upon the present
status of electrical engineering.
Sincerely,
Chas. A. Key

Schenectady, N.Y. Sept. 14, 1922.

Mr. Charles W. Appleton,
New York Office,
120 Broadway,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Appleton:

Your letter dated the 7th, and postmarked the 11th, came to my attention on the 13th, upon returning from the big Edison 40th Anniversary Celebration, given by the New York Edison Company.

In relation to my testimony in the Philadelphia Co. rate case, given in 1915 (as you say, although I would have to refer to my personal diary to refresh my memory on that point), I could furnish no data specifically taken from my report, just at this moment, at least, as I am about leaving on vacation. But I shall be pleased to look up that matter on my return.

Just now, I have doubt whether anything gathered from the Philadelphia rate case will illuminate to any useful degree the salient question in your letter, second paragraph, where you say: "There are a great many people who believe that the development of the incandescent electric lamp was the very foundation of all subsequent electrical developments, etc."

I absolutely agree with the whole of your second

paragraph, based upon my having been (1) one of Edison's assistants at his Menlo Park Laboratory three months after his fundamental lamp invention was made, October 21, 1879; (2) chief engineer for a number of years, when the business of lighting was first commercially exploited, and (3) intimately connected with the extension of the use of electricity ever since.

It was the incandescent lamp, and its romantic financial prospects, that induced capital to come in. And it was the development of the generating, distributing and supply system for lamps that later made it worth while to develop other electrical apparatus, as motors, etc., to operate from such system. From this start the use of electricity for power and general electrical appliance use grew.

It is idle and a waste of time to speculate on what the standing of electrical power and general appliances would be today, if the incandescent lamp had not come first or had never been invented. The lamp did come first, and from it all the other things commercially issued.

Very truly yours

(signed) *Chas. L. Leake*

P.S. A search in the advertising pages of bound volumes of technical journals at the Engineering Societies Library, 39th Street, might be informing as to dates of advent of power and general appliance apparatus.